



Education International 6<sup>th</sup> World Congress - Friday, 22 July 2011

# World Congress Newsletter

Building the future through quality education

[www.ei-ie.org/congress6](http://www.ei-ie.org/congress6) • [www.twitter.com/eduint](http://www.twitter.com/eduint) • [www.facebook.com/educationinternational](http://www.facebook.com/educationinternational) • <http://go.ei-ie.org/flickr>

## Welcome to EI's sixth World Congress!

As South Africans would say in the local language of Xhosa, *wamkelekile nonke iKapa!* (Welcome everyone to Cape Town!). EI is delighted to welcome participants from around the world to the sixth World Congress.

Over the next few days there will be a great deal of debate and activity about how to address the challenges and opportunities that the education trade union movement is confronted with in order to secure a future for the education profession where qualified teachers, well-resourced and inclusive institutions equip all children and young people for a brighter future.

With breakout sessions, key note speeches, as well as time for participants to share experiences from one another and take part in a programme of social events, to celebrating the achievements of EI Awardees, it is essential that we keep everyone up-to-date with all that is happening.



El President Susan Hopgood listens to Irene Duncan-Adanusa, El Vice-President for Africa, as she addresses journalists at the pre-Congress press conference.

Apart from reading this daily newsletter, participants can access interactive Congress features: a Twitter message board on the Congress website ([www.ei-ie.org/congress6/](http://www.ei-ie.org/congress6/)) using the hashtag #eicongress to post your thoughts, reactions, and news; El's Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/educationinternational/](http://www.facebook.com/educationinternational/). Pictures of

Congress sessions will also be available on El's Flickr page: <http://go.ei-ie.org/flickr>  
The Congress website and El's main website ([www.ei-ie.org](http://www.ei-ie.org)) are other resources for Congress news.

So, keep updated, keep in touch, and enjoy Congress and Cape Town!

## SA minister addresses women's caucus

'To plan for a day, catch a fish. To plan for a year, plant rice. To plan for a decade, plant a tree. To plan for a lifetime, educate a girl.'

Lulama Xingwana, South Africa's Minister for Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities, received warm applause when she quoted this proverb in her keynote address to 300 activists at the EI Women's Caucus meeting on Thursday, 21 July, in Cape Town, South Africa.

Xingwana offered powerful evidence of progress towards gender equality in South Africa. For example, prior to the fall of apartheid, a mere two per cent of Members of Parliament were women. Today 44 per cent of MPs are women and, even more significantly, 43 per cent of cabinet members are women. She also noted progress towards universal access to

free education and health care services for pregnant women and children under five, as well as vastly improved access to clean water and electrification, including in rural areas.

Noting that gender segregation persists in terms of educational and career paths of girls and boys, the minister emphasised new strategies to encourage girls to study the sciences and economics. She cited the 'Techno Girl' programme, which enables girls to participate in work internships in information technology, engineering, mining and other non-traditional professions.

El President, Susan Hopgood, concluded: "We are in the right job – education – and in the right place – unions – to make a difference and to help build a better world."

## Today's programme

- 08.45–12.30  
Congress Plenary  
Opening ceremony  
including address by South Africa's Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe and El President Susan Hopgood
- 12.30–14.00  
Lunch break
- 13.30–14.00  
Presentation of VUE Project Video: No to child labour! Yes to education!
- 14.00–17.30  
Congress Plenary
- 17.45–20.30  
Welcome Evening

## Trade unionists join together for LGBT rights

More than 150 trade unionists and equality campaigners met in Cape Town to celebrate the biggest trade union Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender event in Africa.

The third Education International (EI)-Public Services International (PSI) LGBT Forum took place from 18-19 July, and was attended by education and public sector workers from 45 countries around the world who heard from a number of union and civil society speakers, including Zacki Achmat from Equal Education.

Other speakers on the first of the two-day event included Phyllis Opoku-Gyimah from the Public and Commercial Services' Union (UK) and Gabriella Bonilla Pacheco from EI's Latin America Region, who led deliberations about practical actions that education and public sector unions are engaged in, including drawing up specific policies promoting LGBT representation; organising and recruiting LGBT workers; establishing LGBT networks, mainstreaming LGBT issues within union and government agendas and ensuring LGBT human rights are included in education and training.



EI-PSI LGBT Forum participants.

Delegates shared experiences about the forms of discrimination, violence and inequality LGBT people face, focussing on strategies to secure rights in schools, workplaces, and public services. They also engaged in debates and workshops, before proposing a plan of action for LGBT rights. The Forum concluded with a statement 'recognising the international momentum to protect rights based on sexual orientation and gender identity and the diversity inherent in LGBT communities'.

PSI's LGBT Forum co-Chair, Junéia Batista, from FETAM (Brazil) thanked delegates for their work and noted the large participation and contribution of African colleagues. She encouraged delegates to "turn words into deeds" when they returned home to their countries and unions. EI's LGBT Forum co-Chair, Bob Chase, from NEA (USA) closed the event by expressing appreciation for the increasing support and participation of 'straight allies' in the Forum.

## Bring a Book for Equal Education!

With almost 70 per cent of schools in South Africa not having access to a properly equipped library where children can learn and teachers can teach, EI has been encouraging all participants who are coming to Congress to 'bring a book' from their country and help to build a library.

EI has joined forces to work with Equal Education which is a movement of young people, parents, teachers and unions working for quality and equality in education across South Africa. Equal Education is supported by South African teachers' unions, NAPTOSA and SADTU and recently held a People's Summit for Quality Education in Cape Town.

Please visit Equal Education at their stand in the EI Congress exhibition area, where you can deposit your books and learn more about the campaigns which it runs, and how you can continue to support it when you return to your own country.

More information is also available on the website: [www.equaleducation.org.za](http://www.equaleducation.org.za)



Congress participants arrive for registration

## News in brief

### Indigenous Caucus

Indigenous Peoples' Caucus met yesterday to identify actions that could shape public education systems that take account of multicultural and multilingual education. Key speakers included Darcel Russell from AEU (Australia); Dr Juan Arancibia, a researcher from Chile, and Gladys Pajuelo, from SUTEP (Peru) who presented the study: *El Preliminary Report on Multilingual and Intercultural Education in Latin America*.

### Education and Solidarity Network

The General Assembly of the Education and Solidarity Network convened yesterday to debate ways in which to give assistance to education workers. Debates included tackling teachers' health concerns and dealing with the financial consequences through insurance protection schemes. It also dealt with the importance of education programmes on social protection, ending with the call to "challenge economic globalisation by globalising solidarity!"

### Communicators' Network

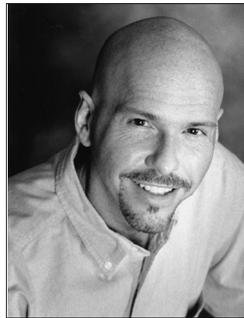
Communications officers from 24 education unions around the world gathered yesterday to share experiences about the challenges facing EI member organisations to win the media battle for strong union representation. EI members: AFT and NEA (USA), NAPTOSA (South Africa) and Lararförbundet (Sweden) presented case studies of successful union media campaigns and activities, before participants built strategies for further media co-operation initiatives.

## Delegate of the day

Stephen Henry, National Education Association (NEA), USA

*What are the main obstacles to achieving LGBT equality in the world?*

The main obstacle is eliminating bias. Another one is the silence, or reluctance, in confronting this bias by speaking out against the discrimination and working for its elimination.



*What role can education unions play to promote and defend LGBT rights?*

Through education, training and awareness raising, unions can break down the barriers of bias and teach the value and richness of diversity. Firstly, by providing training to our members, advocating for secure

language in contracts and supporting policies and laws that protect LGBT individuals. Secondly, the work must continue in our schools and classrooms. Public schools must be a safe, caring, and welcoming place for every student.

*What have been the main LGBT achievements in the USA over the last 10 years?*

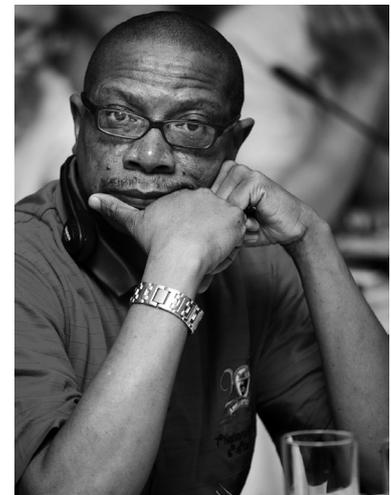
For nine years, the standing committee on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) has worked within NEA on LGBT issues. The NEA Human and Civil Rights Division has also established a cadre of national trainers to work with educators on 'Safety, Bias and LGBT Issues in Education'. Several states now allow same-sex marriage equality; 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' has been repealed thus allowing gay members of the military to serve openly, and national hate crime legislation now includes inclusive language. There is still much work to be done but the tide of public opinion has begun to move in the direction of equality.

## Higher Education Caucus demands defence against attacks

Over the last four years, the financial meltdown – which was sparked by reckless speculation and unregulated greed by the financial services sector – has dramatically altered the political and economic landscape of the higher education and research sector. Many governments have been encouraged by international financial institutions to take aim at public spending, including expenditure on higher education and research, as a way to cut deficits and levels of public debt.

Opening the meeting, Grahame McCulloch, General Secretary of Australia's National Tertiary Education Union, said: "In many ways, the economic crisis has provided governments with a convenient excuse for so-called higher education 'reform'. We have seen many attempts to undermine traditional governance models of higher education institutions by weakening the voices of teachers and researchers – this is unacceptable!"

In the ensuing discussion and updates about the situation of higher education in a number of countries, participants agreed not to be deterred by these challenges.



Kaiser Makole, SADTU Research Officer

As representatives of unions of higher education and research professionals, participants seized the opportunity to develop an effective and co-ordinated response to these attacks on education.

EI and its member organisations will fend off attacks on higher education and research with one powerful voice!

## Quiz of the day

1. In which year was EI founded?
  - a. 1993
  - b. 1994
  - c. 1995
2. Where did EI hold its fourth World Congress?
  - a. Harare, Zimbabwe
  - b. Porto Alegre, Brazil
  - c. Berlin, Germany
3. Who is not a founding member of EI?
  - a. Mary H. Futrell
  - b. Bill Clinton
  - c. Albert Shanker

Send your name and answers to:  
claude@ei-ie.org.

The randomly chosen winning entry will receive a box of chocolates.

## Campaign of the day

### No to cuts! Defend pay, pensions & public services

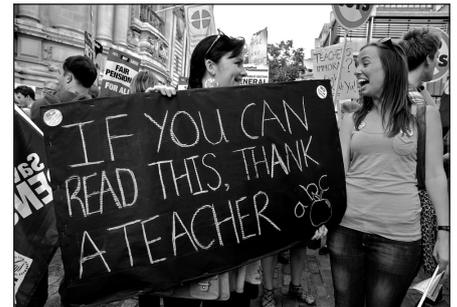
National Union of Teachers (NUT) United Kingdom

With the global financial crisis, many governments worldwide are attacking public services, workers' salaries and pensions. In doing so, they are harming teachers' jobs and working conditions, as well as threatening a younger generation's future and quality education for all.

In the UK, the NUT is working together with the Trade Union Confederation (TUC) and other public sector unions to oppose cuts in vital public services and propose alternative ways of building economic recovery.

This campaign gives teachers and education unions a wide range of tools to effectively advocate to government and mobilise civil society to defend public services. Campaign resources include:

- 'What teachers need to know about the cuts': a leaflet explaining the context of the cuts and the damage they will cause, as well as workable alternatives to cuts, privatisation and job losses.
- 'Small change for banks, big change for people!' A call for joint action to get a Financial Transaction Tax through the 'Make Finance Work' campaign; uniting trade unions, civil society and NGOs.
- Response to European Commission consultation on financial sector



Rally against pension cuts in England. Photo by Steve Punter via Flickr

taxes: a briefing document highlighting the NUT's key points on this fair taxation.

- Protect vulnerable children: an email campaign to contact MPs and protest against government cuts.
- No to Cuts rallies and demonstrations: Information and pictures about NUT involvement in globally-supported protests against government cuts.
- NUT Campaign on post-16 funding and pay: a powerpoint presentation on post-16 funding and pay to raise awareness of the funding situation and viable alternatives to cuts in the UK.

For further information and access to all campaign materials please visit: [www.teachers.org.uk/notocuts](http://www.teachers.org.uk/notocuts)

## Video of the Day

No to child labour!  
Yes to Education!  
10 min. EI VUE Project (EI/NEA/SNE).  
Showing today, 12.30–14.00  
Plenary Hall

Around the world more than 200 million children are forced to work. In response to their plight, EI and its member unions are speaking out in defence of child's fundamental right to quality public education. In Morocco, the SNE has developed a range of successful strategies to keep children in the classroom and out of the workplace. Watch the video to learn more.



## Gender stereotypes in the classroom

Gender equality in education goes beyond ensuring that equal numbers of girls and boys attend school. It is about changing attitudes and providing the best learning environments for girls and boys.

Your union can promote gender-sensitive language, and learning opportunities for all students, along with support and training to teachers.

You can use this postcard in your campaign and advocacy work. Contact EI for support: [gender@ei-ie.org](mailto:gender@ei-ie.org).

